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January, 1971

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## A MESSAGE FROM THE B.M.F. CHAIRMAN

A young hospital chaplain answered an urgent call and asked the Ward Sister why she needed him. She led him to the bedside of a deeply unconscious patient and expected him to do something. The chaplain did not know the patient. There was no possibility then of effecting a personal relationship with him. He offered a quiet prayer and went away wondering. I thought, and years later I still think, that nurse had a conception of faith which took the chaplain to be one who has divine authority to dispense grace in the spiritual realm rather as a doctor might have injected a drug into the patient's body.

That incident started me thinking about the practical bearing of a theology of grace, and it has helped me over the years to see why ministers in different traditions hold different emphases about the practise of their ministry.

About the same time I was introduced to the books of John Oman and H. H. Farmer. Both men underlined the importance of our understanding the faith in terms of personal encounter between God and man through the divine-human Christ. This is what grace is about. It is not a thing; it is a relationship in which God has taken a gracious initiative which comes to the succour and enrichment of men who respond to what God was, and is, and does, in and through Christ.

So I am sharing with you, colleagues and brethren in the ministry, my gratitude that we have been called to a work which can only be done by our being and living in a dependent personal relationship with God through our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the basic requirement, although no doubt the development and dedication of various skills helps.

And our ministry is all within grace. It is to awaken men to the grace of God and to help them grow in grace. We are to help people to be persons or rather children in the Father's family, and this is a heartwarming privilege in an impersonal society. One's list of friends grow as the years of ministry lengthen. I think of our B.M.F. entirely in personal terms and I hope it helps us as being one of the expressions of our brotherhood in Christ.

Last week in another hospital a patient remarked to me, "I envy you the sense of purpose and the satisfaction that people in your calling have. You have less money than I have, but you have something that is too rare in this world."

I pass that on for your consideration.

C. S. HALL

## THE PRESENT TASK OF THEOLOGY: I

I am going to present to you something out of the first volume of my *Dogmatik*, which has appeared so far in German only and will, in due time, be available in English\*

The book consists of two parts. In Part One, I set modern theology in confrontation with conservative theology. My goal is to point out that such a distinction is not a valid one. I will come back to this later. In Part Two, we have a detailed critique of the "God-is-dead-Theology" and a theological interpretation of the age of secularism.

First, I want briefly to explain why I deny this distinction between conservative and modern. "Modern theology" is generally understood to be a theology which grasps contemporary problems, and particularly those posed by historicism and modern science—although this definition is continually changing. Now let me ask you: Is there any theology so conservative which does not also address itself to these same problems? There is no *serious* theological conception which can simply ignore historic-critical study of the scriptures, or conceive of the creation story as an historical document which opposes the theory of biological evolution. We must look elsewhere to find the difference between these two theological conceptions which really counts.

For the term "modern" let me substitute "Cartesian" theology; and, instead of "conservative" let me speak of "non-Cartesian-theology". What is implied here? With the words *cogito ergo sum*, ("I think, therefore I am") Descartes introduced the human ego as the strategically important point in all theological and philosophical reflection. Since then, one has been occupied with the prerequisites of understanding which are inherent in the individual. One is no longer able to perceive of revelation as *octroi*—as a concession of grace, as a grant—and remain merely receptive and thus above criticism. In fact, one must repeatedly ask whether what is implied within revelation can at all be appropriated, or whether it is congruent with the structure of our understanding. These prerequisites, (this structure of understanding) therefore, give us the criterion to ask: "Can I 'appropriate' revelation? Does it really concern me, or is it merely metaphysics limited by its historical setting?"

Now here is something characteristic: "What begins as a 'criterion' becomes unknowingly a 'law'!" In fact, the whole history of catholic dogmatic development is known for this. At first, the Church's teaching (i.e., 'tradition') is merely the criterion for the understanding of the scriptures. Unknowingly, it became "normative", and finally the scriptures were relegated to a dependent position—that is to say, to the *first stage* of tradition. What was originally "criterion" later became "dominant" or "normative".

Cartesian theology appears to be in exactly the same position: the prerequisites of understanding, and the hermeneutic principles which they set forth, should merely be *criteria* of understanding. Here as well, however, we can observe a

\* Harper & Row (New York).

danger: that, in the end, consciousness will become dominant and revelation be manipulated up to the point where it fits into the very structure of *my* consciousness. Eventually, then, it becomes totally integrated, and as a result we have existentialism with a Christian flavouring. How dangerous this amalgamation is can be shown in an explication of Bultmann: he is the most classic example—and some of his disciples are even more extreme—for this process in which the prerequisites of understanding dominate thinking, and in the end alter completely the substance of revelation.

Unfortunately, I am unable to discuss now the opposing view of the non-Cartesian theology. It is included, however, in my book. This may appear to be a cunning attempt to get you to read my book, but it is really a matter of space *only*.

This much I do want to say, however: my opinion is that any present-day theology must be a theology of the Holy Spirit. As a consequence, the *logos*, filled by the Spirit, completely changes the prerequisites of my understanding and my perceptibility. It creates a new being. The Spirit enables man to hear aright. The Word is *creative*, and opens new horizons, leading to new conceptions followed by many new problems. For, if we do not conceive of the Holy Spirit in a magical sense, (as *deus ex machina*) then we must point out the relevancy of this new creation to the identity of "self". The transforming *logos* does not create a *different* man, abolishing my own identity. For that reason, I must extend my inquiry into the structure of understanding *within* the *old* and the *new* man, as well as to the synthesis of *both*. In fact, this thinking-process is the main subject of my book.

Let me now begin with an important thesis of Bultmann: "Understanding and interpretation are always fixed towards a specific kind of inquiry, towards a specific 'for what?'" (German: "Ein Verstehen, eine Interpretation ist stets an einer bestimmten Fragestellung, an einen bestimmten Woraufhin orientiert.") In this statement, Bultmann makes it quite clear that I do not receive anything unconditionally, that I am in no way passively receptive, but that, on the contrary, I introduce something of my own to each text I venture to understand, even to the New Testament. Myself is, as it were, an active part in this process.

The motive which compels us to search for this 'self'—and world-understanding is not an interest in a general time-diagnosis but a theological intention. Even if we do not want to make this world-understanding the starting point of our thinking, we are nevertheless confronting the world and its self-understanding with the proclamation; or, more explicitly, we are not only "confronting" but we are ourselves part of this world. We Christians also engage in physics in the same "atheistic" fashion, because we must presuppose a fixed system of immanence in natural sciences. We also proceed "historically" in guarding against the ideological-theological constructions of the historical relationship and by limiting ourselves in our statements to the given and the tangible. We also proceed politically (or should do so) in avoiding theocratic Utopias by dealing with the given and the attainable as the

object of our actions: we are pragmatists. We also are called out of this "atheistic" connection to the given and overcome towards a new assurance. *For us also theology thus is and remains a monologue between the spiritual and natural man within ourselves.*

We cannot avoid the fact that we as preachers are speaking to a world which understands itself in this described fashion as "atheistic". If "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son (John 3:16), and if consequently the Gospel is addressed to this world, then our proclamation has to search out the world in its self-understanding and be related to it. It is not the so-called "developed church" with its Christian conventions that provokes the questioning, but explicitly the *world* provokes the questioning, i.e., that world which thinks of itself as being "atheistic".

In this regard Luther teaches us that progress in faith does not elevate us into a certain sanctified status, but constantly reverses us to a new beginning, to the point where we are challenged to leave our ungodly bondage and are overcome by faith.

The characteristic of the new man is this: He is constantly at a new point of departure; he does not grow beyond this new beginning, but merges into it; he does not leave his initiation through baptism behind himself, but rather delves the more deeper into it. The overcoming of the old Adam constantly occurs anew. If this old Adam, however, is man who understands himself as being "atheistic" in a sense of innerworldliness, then the constant new beginning of his new existence is based on a continual overcoming of the prerequisites of his understanding of self.

To this extent Christian proclamation is either missionary-minded or it is none at all. The impetus of Missions draws its strength from the fact of man's calling and his remembrance thereof. If one of the most significant criteria for a healthy Church and its teaching is this, that both have a concern for Missions (Ti. 1:13, 2:2), then it is not because of urge for expansion which may be based on thriving vitality, but because such a Church understands itself as being called and because she is aware of a continual new beginning. In this way she resists the temptation to give in to thoughts directed towards a certain perfection of the spiritual life, of the institutional or towards a certain perfection of an attained holiness-degree. The Church cannot perceive of herself as if she were "grown-out-of" or "based" on tradition nor even as if she were developing it, but she must see herself as a communion of those who have been called and of those who are again and again called to leave their old existence behind. The missionary-minded congregation is always a "young" congregation, receiving the miracle of faith constantly anew. It receives baptism day by day.

For this reason preaching must be governed by the question: "What makes a person who is a decided non-believer come to believe in the Christian Gospel?" We could rightly ask this question in defending the thesis that the questions to be asked are not determined by the normal congregation, but rather that

it is the "atheistic" self-understanding of secular man which poses the questions and to which our preaching must be correlated. And it may appear to be paradoxical, indeed: *Not the believer but the unbeliever is the criterion which makes a theology convincing*, i.e. for the rank-order of argumentation on which a theology is based and within which its goals are set; these both are its very foundation.

*With this we aim at the Question of the Essence of Secularization.*

Before we turn to this phenomenon and its understanding of existence, we shall first analyse a different concept, that of the proclamation of a self-contained finiteness in which is implied the renunciation of transcendence and the metaphysical. We mean the concept of the "Death-of-God" as it has been termed by a group of American and German theologians. Although one may have some inhibitions in dealing with this term, it does offer certain optimal possibilities, however, to show how the Christian Message comes to grips with the issues of our time. Such inhibitions may be caused by the following: First, this slogan has a provocative appeal similar to that of the concept of demythologizing, which addresses itself to emotional strata and stirs up *resentments*. These, however, do not necessarily have their origin in debating faith. Second, our inhibition towards this concept is based on the fact that the term "Death-of-God" cannot be meant seriously, but employs the trick of bewildering—and to this extent it is a journalistic device. It is a catch-word of atheistic philosophy coined by Nietzsche which is no longer an antithesis of faith, but assumes to be the point of departure of faith. In so doing, it is highly deceptive inasmuch as it presents a peculiar kind of solidarity of opposite fronts.

The word of the "Death-of-God" cannot be taken seriously, at least not literally, because it contains a logical contradiction: either God who has been delivered unto death was never God—so that the figure of speech of His death in reality means only the death of an illusion that existed up to now, or the "Death-of-God" only means that He died in a sense which means the fading of an individualistic *experience* of God, or the quenching of an assurance still existing, or the diminishing of an accepted concept of God which thereby becomes subject to change. But then not God has died, but a certain form of our faith or our concept of God. "Either God *is* dead and then He does not die", for then He never existed and then Feurbach was right in his criticism. "What can die is only *faith* in God", but that is only possible if God is not. For if God is, He will always find means and ends to be acknowledged and thus engender faith anew.

Although our inhibition—to use a basically absurd term—is surely justified, it nonetheless offers various approaches for further theological analysis. This is, of course, only possible if the concept of the "Death-of-God" is understood symbolically and then means the silencing of a definite experience of God or the experience of God *per se*.

Given this premise, the contestation with this concept is fruitful in several respects: First, it should express that for the modern experience of reality God has no say, that in the conceptual or pre-conceptual relationship with nature, history, and environment we are on the threshold of an age in which the world is becoming irreligious. Second, this non-existence or non-relevance of assurance of God is attributed by the "Death-of-God" theologians to the fact that a certain way of experiencing God has in fact come to an end; namely the experience of God as an over-worldly, supernatural Being which charges the cosmic make-up from outside. A God thus conceived in the theistic tradition is not capable of being accommodated, as Kant has shown, in the table of categories and to this extent means an epistemological absurdity, but also contradicts every kind of conceivable *existential* experience. This is determined by the experience of the self-contained finiteness and the autarchy of this world. The experience and overcoming of our reality *sicut Deus non esset* expresses not only a methodic principle of scientific and technical conduct, but it also implies for the general consciousness a "dogmatic" principle which expresses the non-relevance of God for our experience of reality. God is not perceptible here as an heuristic principle or as a stimulant or as a limitation.

If He plays no role in this influencing transcendence, then this observation compels a negative and a positive consequence. The negative consequence implies that God is introduced to us only in a "pre-given" form—in the sense of Herbert Braun. Since He cannot be experienced in the confrontation with reality, we are required to receive Him as an axiom that first has to be accepted as a *credendum*, and thus He is forced into becoming a premise. This, however, is generally unacceptable for the mature. To this extent theology can only confirm this movement rejecting the secular over against the metaphysical God, the other-worldliness of God.

The *positive* consequence, which is to be drawn, is based on the fact that the view directed away from the Beyond now looks for the immediacy of the earthly-secular God. Man then asks: where does God "happen"? Where does He become relevant? If the God of the Beyond has died, then we ask how He is secular and how He occurs in the context of experience of our world. Has He not delivered himself in Christ to the secular realm and into our suffering? Has He not given Himself up unto weakness, powerlessness, so that "we can kill God, explicitly because He has delivered Himself unto us?"

Here, now, we are confronted with a whole catalogue of theological questions which surprise—possibly even shock!—not only theologians but also children of the world because of the peculiar shifting of problems posed now over against those of a former time. Formerly, a general idea of God in the sense of a natural theology was readily accepted, while Christ and Christology were questioned. But now the opposite is true: God Himself is being questioned and the "God of Omnipotence" is accused because He ignores the affairs of the world and "sees the sufferings of the innocent without acting". Christ, however, remains close to us because the suffering and

impotent God appears in Him, because He is representative of this God as well as of us ourselves in our suffering. Due to this strange reversal of all polemics, a cabaretistic mood gave the "God-is-Dead" boys the characteristic slogan: "There is no God and Jesus is His Son."

Thirdly, here we can see once more how the over-emphasized link to contemporary questions has led to the point where one is confronted by an autonomic descent and that unwittingly one is directed explicitly to there where one did not want to go: namely, into a position where the Gospel—the supposed Gospel—has nothing else to offer than what this *Saeculum* was capable of telling itself, which has it represent an aspect of life which has to be disposable by this life *itself*. And again one feels compelled to evoke Lessing's Manes which seems to have anticipated all the conceivable positions of Cartesian theology.

Education, so we read in the *Education of the Human Race*, offers nothing to man that man does not already have within himself and that he could not have developed himself. Lessing had surrendered himself to the temporary thought on education. In making it the principle of an interpretation of the "Gospel", he also had to limit the possible declarations of the "Gospel", that man—in accordance with the paedagogical axiom—was in principle capable of telling himself of whatever was stored in his reservoir of rational truths. But then education makes itself superfluous. It then exercises only an interim function. For those who have become mature, it is no longer of interest.

And also the "Death-of-God" theologians in the midst of their blind following, caused by the secularized premises of the Gospel, were not capable of saying anything that was not already included in those pre-suppositions.

HELMUT THIELICKE

Professor Thielicke's second article, which will appear in the April issue, discusses some further aspects of the 'God is Dead' theology.

## A NEW MACEDONIAN CALL?

Those of us who can remember the excitements of the Chuter Ede, Rab Butler partnership prior to and during the passing of the 1944 Education Act, will understand when it is claimed that social workers of all disciplines were just as excited by the Crossman/Ennals partnership after the publication of the Seebohm Report and prior to the passing of the Local Authority Social Services Bill. This Bill contains the key recommendations of 'Seebohm', which among other things recommended the unifying of the Welfare Services into one Social Service Department. Mr Crossman, (then Secretary of State for Social Services) in moving the Second Reading, described the primary object "of the personal social services as strengthening the capacity of the family to care for its members and to supply, as it were, the family's place where necessary and to provide social support or if necessary a home for people who cannot look after themselves or be adequately looked after in their own families".

The main recommendations of the Bill are that in each Local Authority there shall be a new social service department to be responsible for:

- (a) the present services provided by the Children's Department.
- (b) the Welfare Services provided under the National Assistance Act 1948.
- (c) Education and Welfare Services and the Child Guidance Service.
- (d) the Home Help Service, Mental Health social services, adult training centres, day nurseries provided by the local Health Departments.
- (e) certain social welfare work currently undertaken by some housing departments.

As the 1944 Education Act was a challenge to the churches to encourage young people to enter the Teaching profession, so this Local Authority Social Services Act is a challenge to the churches to recruit and prepare people for professional and voluntary community service. This Bill, like Seebohm, recognises that if the Welfare State is to be in reality a Caring Community we shall need not only many more professional social workers but a vast army of keen, prepared (trained) voluntary workers. The following quotations from 'Seebohm' reveal the past and present value of voluntary workers and their necessity in the future:—

"Voluntary organisations pioneered social service reform in the past and we see them playing a major role in developing citizen participation in revealing new needs and in exposing shortcomings in the services".

"Voluntary organisations will have an important part to play in social development areas especially by considering the redistribution of their resources to those areas of greatest need".

"The social service department should play an important part in giving support, both financial and professional, to vigorous, outward looking voluntary organisations which can

demonstrate good standards of service, provide opportunities for appropriate training for their workers both professional and voluntary and show a flair for innovation. A really productive partnership between the local authority and voluntary organisations in the social service field will require modifications in the ideas of both”.

“Established voluntary organisations are reviewing and assessing critically their policies, and new types of voluntary organisations are emerging, often around self-help groups, and increasingly characterised by the youthfulness of their members and the radical nature of their criticisms of the existing services”.

“A certain level of mutual criticism between local authority and voluntary organisations may be essential if the needs of consumers are to be met more effectively and they are to be protected from the misuse of bureaucratic and professional power in either kind of organisation”.

“With the continuing growth of the personal social services it will be more and more necessary for local authorities to enlist the services of large numbers of volunteers to complement the teams of professional workers, and the social service department must become a focal point to which those who wish to give voluntary help can offer their services. There is sometimes difficulty in obtaining an adequate supply of regular voluntary workers, not only to meet new demands but also to replace those who have served for many years. We have little doubt that there is a large untapped supply of such people who would willingly offer their services if the jobs were worthwhile, were clearly defined and shown to be relevant to present-day needs even though they might involve a very modest amount of time. Volunteers would be forthcoming if it were known that, without their continued help, many of the social services might find it impossible to do much more than help the known casualties, with little hope of extending preventive action. Volunteers have an important role to play in residential institutions, such as hospitals and old people’s homes, though a different one from that of professionally trained residential care workers. The recent growth of young people’s voluntary service movements is among the developments which show a new response to demonstrated need”.

“By using volunteers in this way, not only will it be possible to give more help to more people who need it but also to encourage citizen participation and associate a considerable cross-section of the community with the work of the social service department”.

“It would be a grave error for anyone to regard the service of a voluntary worker as charity, in the worst sense of that word. Indeed, we have no doubt of the social value of voluntary work, not only in contributing to the resources available to help the community but in showing concern for neighbours and helping people returning to the community from institutions such as prison and mental hospitals and so demonstrating community acceptance of them. The department must include volunteers in its plans and it will have to show, in the training of new staff, the important role of volunteers”.

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These unqualified recognitions of the importance of the Voluntary worker and the Voluntary organisations are reiterated in the Green Paper on the National Health Service which recommends re-structuring of the Health and Hospital Services. One whole chapter is devoted to "Local Participation" and its appreciation of the Voluntary worker can be assessed by the following quotations:—

"There is undoubtedly a much greater potential for the participation of Voluntary workers in the Health service than has been realised in the past and a much wider role for the work of voluntary organisations. There are many needs of the sick and handicapped which are better met by voluntary workers than by paid staff".

"The discussions following the publication of the first Green Paper have shown that the voluntary organisations are ready to take a fresh look at their activities and to see how they need to be adapted to work alongside an integrated service".

"Grants and subsidies paid by the area health authority—either from its approved allocation of finance or, where appropriate, from trust and endowment funds—will be available to support voluntary bodies which provide and promote services with the general scope of the authority's responsibilities".

"Voluntary effort may also be needed to enable relatives and friends to visit when distance or disability makes this impossible without special help. The greater the participation of the local community in its local health services, the greater the response of the service to the community's needs and of the community to the service's needs. Voluntary work can be an important source for the recruitment of paid staff".

In view of this official recognition of the need and value of voluntary workers it would seem that the appearance of the Aves Report in December last year, with its comprehensive survey of the role of Voluntary Organisations and 'Volunteers' in the life of our nation, was most opportune. It recommends, among other things, that Councils of Social Service or some other similar bodies should establish Voluntary Workers Bureaux (for the recruitment and placing of voluntary workers), and the setting up of Joint Committees for the training of Voluntary Workers (to promote and co-ordinate preparation and training).

The writer, as Organizing Secretary of the Exeter Diocesan Council for Family and Social Welfare, is now very much involved in pioneering the setting up of a Joint Committee in co-operation with the Devon Councils of Social Service, Children's, Welfare and Health Departments, the Sociology Department of Exeter University and Educational Authorities, with a view to recruiting more voluntary workers from churches of all traditions in Devon, and initiating a Steering Committee to co-ordinate Training plans.

Is this genuine search for voluntary workers an answer to a question often asked by Ministers and Clergy, "What kind of Social Service should we encourage our people to be involved in?". Is this one of the ways in which God is making a Macedonian call to Christians, who claim to be members of

Caring Communities, to be much more involved in community life? Is God, in His wisdom, using the theological emphasis on the Servant Church, the ecclesiastical plea for restructuring, the young Christians' impatience for ecumenical action, and the overall concern about Mission, and calling us all to venture Abraham like, into a new era of Social Service, presenting us all with new opportunities for pioneering and service?

Abbe Couterier, the pioneer of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, was convinced that 'as we pray together we stay together', but it is not so well known that he was equally sure that 'as we work together we grow together'. It could well be that this general Macedonian call for voluntary workers is an indirect way of promoting closer co-operation between the Churches, thus helping us to know each other better as we work together in service.

Lord Radcliffe Maud addressing a National Conference of Voluntary Workers recently, said, concerning the new Social Service Departments:—

"We must take the chance that the new structure offers and make the most of it, whether as members of the new authorities or as professionals employed by them, or as their indispensable critics . . . This will mean restructuring the Voluntary movement to match new statutory patterns and building in new flexibilities so that the movement keeps pace with the increasing rate of social and economic change".

Is it asking too much to suggest that churches also should "take the chance that the new structure offers", and build into their life "new flexibilities" and at the same time think seriously about restructuring for service?

W. T. COWLAN

## A CITY PASTORATE IN GLASGOW

When God shut the door in China and opened it in Glasgow, I little thought He was giving me (age 54) a new ministry of 16 years. This tough and exhilarating task can be recorded in four stages of growth.

1. *A NEW BEGINNING.* (October '52—December '53)  
A new beginning it certainly was, for minister and church. The sudden termination of 28 years service in China was a shattering blow, and it was with sad hearts we parted from our friends and came to this new mission field. But my wife and I were buoyed up by God's call and His promise, "*I will do a new thing.*"

Adelaide Place Church, this Victorian "Greek Temple" seating 1000 people situated in the centre of Glasgow and surrounded by a sea of offices, shops and car-parks, had become a 'problem church' whose future was being considered by a

committee of church and Baptist Union. I knew nothing about this, only that God had sent me here.

So we came together in 1952 for God to work out His purpose through us. The life of this down-town church was indeed at a low ebb. Nevertheless, God, the God of the Resurrection, was here in the faithful minority who were praying for revival. Here was a situation which called for the application of missionary principles, the first being "*Move men, through God, by prayer alone.*" The Wednesday evening Prayer-meeting became the power centre of a revitalised fellowship, with the Living Christ in control directing the advance along lines of united prayer, Bible instruction, real evangelism and missionary outreach.

This new life appearing needed *training for God's army* (second missionary principle). Communist China had shown me that only a church built on Christ, fed on His Word and fortified by His Spirit can conquer the onslaught of militant atheism. This meant systematic Bible teaching on Sunday mornings and evenings, at the week-night fellowship meeting and at the Minister's Bible-class for young people. My method was to plan each year's preaching from the books of the Bible during the latter part of our annual month's holiday in the Highlands. This enabled me to put the sermon subjects and scriptural references in each month's church magazine so that preacher and hearer could prepare together to receive God's Message.

This Bible teaching ministry attracted some new worshippers, but caused 17 members to transfer their membership to other churches. The reasons, they told me, were—I was changing this historic church into a "mission", I was making it a "fundamental" church, I was preaching as if they were "Chinese heathen who needed to be converted". I was disturbed by this, and felt sad to see these old members leaving. It was true. All my life I had been preaching to non-Christians, and now I had not adjusted myself to preaching the Gospel to Christians. We must reach the non-Christians.

This was done by applying the third missionary principle—"*Go to all people*". Praying together burdened us with Christ's zeal to go out and tell the Good News to every person in this city centre. A plan of House-to-House visitation evangelism, based on Luke chapter 10, was passed by the Deacons and the Church meeting. After 9 months' preparation, it was put into action in an area of half-a-mile radius round the church. The 2 weeks' evening visitation of the overcrowded tenement flats was an exciting experience for the 45 volunteers. We discovered that instead of "no people", there were 7000 people on electoral lists living here, and that one-third of these had no church connection. These became our responsibility, the burden of our prayers to lead them to Christ.

The results of this mission were disappointing. No new people joined the church, though we welcomed new children to the Sunday-school. Why so little fruit? We considered the question in prayer together and learned an important lesson—that it is not the initial but the repeated visitation that bears fruit. The work begun must be continued.

## 2. *AN EVANGELISING FELLOWSHIP* (January '54—December '58)

This apostolic practice of "going again and visiting our brethren" became the normal activity each year of seventy lay evangelists. This created a bond of loving friendship with our neighbours. We were no longer an island, but part of the life of a great city, serving the community—visiting the sick and those in Barlinnie prison, shopping for the aged, helping cramped families to secure ampler housing and fighting some of the social evils that were killing them.

Behind this practical evangelism was a powerful support of intercessory prayer and Bible inspiration, which was reviving the spiritual lives of us all and firing us with the passion to offer all men the New Life in Christ. It was producing new activities—Street fishing, increased Sunday school, Young People's Fellowship, Girls' Guildry, Boys' Club, the whole congregation was growing together into the maturity of the Body of Christ. The secretary reported at the 4th Anniversary Social that 100 new members had been added to the church.

We were further humbled and encouraged by God's using of our church and its trained lay evangelists in the "Glasgow Central Churches Campaign." Had you dropped into Adelaide Place Church Hall any night in the Spring of 1958 you would have seen strange things: doors open and lights on all night, hall full of desperately needy folk from the streets, pubs and coffee stalls, all drinking tea and talking with members of the team. Amazed and perplexed you may have asked, "What does this mean?" and you would have learned "This is the activity of the Living Christ through the members of His United Church."

How did it begin? The Rev. Tom Allan, my dear friend who had spoken such a welcoming word at my Induction Service, had been appointed to the Central Church in Glasgow. We both felt increasingly the burden of Glasgow's crying need for the Gospel of Christ and gave ourselves afresh to prayer for God's leading. The result was that the ministers of the eight central churches (3 Presbyterian, 2 Congregational, 2 Baptist and 1 Methodist) were drawn together in prayer and Bible-study for a year. We were led to invite Scotland's veteran evangelist, Rev. Dr. D. P. Thomson to come and lead a 3 year's Rescue mission.

"D.P." came, and like Montgomery trained an army of 270 tough Christian commandos ready to do whatever the King commanded. In the Spring these 70 ministers and 200 lay men and women "went over the top" in an all-out day and night advance—visiting 7000 homes and business offices and factories, with lunch-hour services; after tea visiting the 95 pubs and dance-halls in this central area. After refreshments, at 11 o'clock out we went for the all night work at the coffee stalls. We unearthed a situation few Glaswegians knew existed. Around the stalls were 300 men and women: the men—criminals planning their work, the women—prostitutes. With our 'Tell Scotland' armbands we mixed and talked freely. Conversations were interrupted by angry shouts as a fight flared up. A man crashed against a wall as a bottle smashed on his

head. The police stepped in and order was restored. Many came back with us to the church hall.

The Press glamourised this aspect of our work. But, believe me, there is no glamour here. In this square mile of concentrated vice there is an air of depravity—squalid, brutal and heart-breaking to a Christian. This is one of Glasgow's dark spots, and it was here that Christ led us to be with Him rescuing the perishing. "God must have sent you here to save me", said a young prodigal. "I never knew anyone loved me like this"? said "Dot" the teenager prostitute as she poured out her sad story and came later to trust in Christ.

The culmination of this great mission is the Rehabilitation Home in central Glasgow dedicated to the adored memory of Tom Allan who burnt his life out for Christ and died age 46 saving others.

### 3. *A MISSIONARY MOVEMENT* (January '59—July '61)

Another sign of Christ's transforming Presence in our midst was the changing of the congregation's outlook from the traditional and parochial to a realistic, world outlook. Our membership was becoming international by the increase of overseas worshippers.

One of the happy features of our congregational life was the fellowship it was providing for Asian and African friends. A dozen or more were regular attenders. Paul Olaoye from Nigeria sang in the choir. On Commonwealth Sunday the whole morning Service was finely led by African and Indian Christians. We were enriched by their lively and joyous faith.

I had the thrill of baptising and receiving into membership Chinese, Indian and African friends, and of marrying others, and dedicating their lovely children. One of many good things about Glasgow is that in its large coloured population I have not met any race discrimination.

My wife and I introduced a new feature which became a popular annual event the "International Evening". Its aim was to learn something about the people in other nations.

First, of course, came China. With our Chinese scrolls, pictures and dresses, together with Chinese students to give songs, music and talks, it was acclaimed as a great success. Each year other nations from Asia, Europe and Africa were set before us by their nationals and with the help of excellent posters from Travel agencies and Consuls. International songs were sung and a happy meal enjoyed by all as we closed by saying the Lord's Prayer in our own language. We became conscious of our oneness in Christ's World Church.

But the greatest honour God gave us during our ministry was the upsurge of missionary zeal by which He called 32 of our young people and sent them forth as His ambassadors into His home and overseas service. Our daughter went to India as a doctor under the B.M.S. Our second daughter with a fellow nurse went to serve in the hospital in Nazareth. Then followed a succession of dedicated young people—doctors and nurses, teachers and technicians, preachers and industrial



### ROBERT DENHOLM HOUSE, NUTFIELD, REDHILL, SURREY.

**Notes and News:** on this page we hope to bring you information concerning our various publications, which we believe you will find of interest. The following books are amongst those which have recently been added to our list. **Dr. Kenneth Greet**, who is the incoming Secretary of the Methodist Conference, has written a book, on the highly controversial subject of Sunday observance entitled '**THE SUNDAY QUESTION**'. Sunday observance is something which increasingly affects churches, Sunday-schools and youth movements. Dr. Greet examines the ways Sunday has been observed down the centuries, weighs up present day trends and points the way to answering the questions involved. This is published at 45p (9/-). The newspaper is one of the main means of transmitting, and commenting on, news and in his new book '**FAITH AND AN EVENING PAPER**' **Fred Milson** takes an evening paper as a starting point and from this there emerges various themes—children; young people; the changing role of women; marriage and divorce; senior citizens; immigrants; living in a city; advertising; politics; participation and protest; death—a most stimulating book. This is published at 50p (10/-). **Ronald Glitheroe's** new book '**DISCOVERING JESUS**' has been written with the younger teenager in mind but will be of interest to older folk as well. The author looks closely at the attitudes and reactions to Jesus, of those who actually knew Him so that readers may form their own opinion. This is price 40p (8/-). The author is head of the Religious Studies Department, Westminster College, Oxford. **Brian Brown's** two books **MAKING SENSE OF LIVING** and **MAKING SENSE OF LOVING** were very well received and he has now written two workbooks for young teenagers. '**THE CHOICE**' is an enquiry into how Jesus responded to the questions raised by the occupation of Palestine by the Romans . . . and His attitude towards those who wanted to make Him leader of the resistance. '**THE SEARCH**' will enable young people to investigate the evidence—using non-Christian historians as well as the New Testament—concerning Jesus, whether He is real or imaginary. Both books are price 30p (6/-) each. The latest in the 'Working With' series is **WORKING WITH SEVENS TO THIRTEENS** in week day groups. Leaders of mid-week activities will find this a storehouse of ideas etc. (Price 50p (10/-), and the latest in the 'Praying With' series is **PRAYING WITH ADULTS**. This is published at 40p (8/-). NCEC publications may be obtained through a local book-seller or direct from '**Robert Denholm House**'. Orders sent direct should include 1d. in the 1/- towards post and packing. More news next issue—with every good wish for 1971.

KEITH M. CRANE  
Sales Promotion

missionaries—going to 8 different countries and to churches in Britain.

This high privilege of partnership with Christ in His world missionary enterprise revolutionised the life and work of the church, making it more efficient and streamlined in its divine mission to Glasgow and the world. It also kindled the fire of intercession for the advancement of Christ's Kingdom on earth. In the Prayer hall was erected a large up-to-date map of the world surrounded by portraits of our missionary members with arrows showing their locations. The monthly flow of letters with missionaries' requests for prayer made the Prayer meeting more significant for each member, as the congregation joined in giving to God's great Cause their prayers, their money, and their lives.

Another opportunity for outreach was given to us through the B.B.C. inviting us on eight occasions to broadcast the Gospel to the nation. Yet another in the Glasgow *Evening Times* inviting us to write Christian Messages to the people for twelve years. So was the Gospel openly proclaimed to the world.

#### 4. TESTING TIMES AND A SPIRITUAL BREAK-THROUGH (September '62—Oct. '68)

No ministry is without its trials. There come times when the way is dark, problems are many and our spirits grow weary. The Tempter seeks to destroy us by despair, doubt, disobedience and escape from circumstances. The occasion was the "scrap and build" fever which had seized changing Glasgow, as hotels, tenements and churches disappeared in dust, and multi-storey flats, colleges, hostels and office blocks took their place. Speculators offered big prices for city sites. Should we sell and rebuild? We submitted to the Baptist Union a proposal to unite College, Church and Headquarters in one modern block on this strategic site. This was not accepted. Uncertainty about the future produced a spirit of defeatism. Could we afford the rising costs of maintaining so large a building? I thought of resigning, but God rebuked my cowardice. I must stay with my people and overcome these difficult problems together.

What problems? Problems of lively persons with different social and educational backgrounds and Biblical emphases growing together into Christ's Body; problems of maintaining the evangelistic edge while building people up in the Faith and helping them to see the implications of full commitment to Christ; problems of carrying deacons and the church with you in new ventures; problems of good relations with other churches in the area; problems of being a spiritual leader and at the same time encouraging and training others to be leaders; problems of knowing when to fight and when to wait, when to press on and when to "run with patience". These all seem to be concentrated in this crisis of uncertainty about the way ahead. Maybe, after finishing a hectic year's Presidential duties all over the country, minister and people had got a bit out of touch and were at cross purposes about what to do. I made mistakes by hasty speech and aggressive attitudes, and my over-busyness had led to neglect of pastoral caring for

my people. This displacement of Christ by an imperious self was remedied by His Cross. After a frank and friendly meeting with our twenty deacons we made a new start by a fresh commitment of our lives to Christ. At a united Communion Service on the following Sunday the whole congregation dedicated their lives to the continuing of the evangelical witness of Christ's Church in this city centre. In October 1964, we began a new venture—the All-age Bible School—which met from 10 to 11 a.m. each Sunday with a membership of 85 students ages ranging from 3 to 83! The group leaders were deacons and members while the minister and his wife were students in different classes. This met the need for closer fellowship of members and deeper knowledge of the Word of God and of the basic doctrines of the Faith.

This renewal of the congregation's spiritual life prepared the way for God to work in reviving power during the last four years of my ministry. "Our Church's Mission in the New Glasgow" was the theme of the Deacons' annual conference with the Corporation's Planning Officer present to give us a picture of our future role in the Glasgow of the Seventies. The surveyors reported the fabric of the church to be good for fifty years! Our church treasurer announced the finances to be once again in a healthy state. But best of all the visitation missions were bearing fruit as never before.

The spiritual 'break-through' came in the summer of 1967, as the Holy Spirit began to work quietly in convicting and converting power. It was awe-inspiring to meet people who came to the vestry moved by the Spirit through the Word preached—a school-girl, a university student, an engineer, a teacher, a house-wife, an office worker . . . saying they wanted to be a Christian. Who will ever forget the five mighty baptismal services and the solemn Communion services when the Living Christ was vividly present welcoming these 25 new members into the fellowship of His Church. Never in my ministry have I seen such a spontaneous movement of the Spirit of God. The reason? The veteran Rev. Alex Clark wrote, "Prevailing prayer has been the secret here as in the heroic days in China".

The last Sunday in June was the crowning joy of our lives as my wife and I sat in the pew and praised God with tears of joy as we saw and heard fifteen of the new recruits conducting the Youth Service. There were the Chinese Tan Hong Seow from Singapore with his fellow graduate Donald (both had just gained B.Sc. with first class honours), Kenny the Rolls-Royce engineer and converted dance-band leader with his group singers—David, Billy, Audrey, Yvonne, Rosemary, Martha and Heather, with Alistair, Gordon and Colin—all contributing in song, music, Scripture reading, prayer and testimony to the marvellous power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. To see the Exalted Christ living in the centre of this keen, talented and dedicated band of young people and in this loyal and active congregation of God's people was my "nunc dimittis", for now "mine eyes have seen Thy salvation" in central Glasgow. And to God alone be the glory.

GEORGE YOUNG

## THE MINISTER AS PREACHER

Readers of 'The Fraternal' may recall an article by Ronald Armstrong, "A New Way for Christian Preaching". It cannot fail to have reinforced their sense of responsibility for this side of their ministerial office. How right he is! And how wrong is the Methodist lecturer who was quoted in the *British Weekly* some time ago as declaring that "The days of preaching are nearly over. It is a bad educational method. There is no opportunity of comeback for those who are preached at"! The Christian preacher does not preach *at* people; he preaches *to* people, seeking to impart to them, and to share with them, the truth which God has entrusted to his stewardship. Thus charged, and with all the resources at his command, he commends his Lord to the attention and the acceptance of "all sorts and conditions of men". Discussion, educationally so valuable, is not within his immediate province.

Preaching has a long history, ante-dating the Christian Church and going back to the greater prophets of the Old Testament. As George Adam Smith showed us in his Yale Lectures, they have their significant relevance. But when we take up the New Testament we find inescapable evidence of its primacy in evangelism and in edification. The background and much of the teaching of both Gospels and Epistles are largely due to apostolic preaching. The apostles, especially St. Paul, were preachers, and so were the leaders of the Early Church—preachers rather than "priests".

The subsequent history of Preaching should be read. It is both fascinating and richly rewarding. It enhances our sense of its high prerogatives and it both humbles and exalts us to think that we are in the succession of so many of these great and good men. No one denomination has a monopoly of them, and to know of them brings an enlargement of spirit and outlook which forbids sectarian narrowness. I recommend E. E. Dargan's *History of Preaching* (2 vols), hoping that it is still in print.

R. W. Dale used to read every available book on Preaching. It is an example to be followed, and there are more good books to-day than there were in his day. Amid so many, selection can be invidious but I owe a particular debt to Dale's Yale Lectures, to Spurgeon's *Lectures to my Students* (perhaps the first that I read) and to Phillip Brook's Yale Lectures. But there are others.

Although Preaching is more and greater than sermon construction, Homiletics should be studied. Personally, I gratefully remember my early reading of Broadies' *Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*. Along with Homiletics it is profitable to study a few of the more notable sermons of the greater preachers—not so much for their ideas as for their English style and for their shaping and arrangement of material.

For general reading, there is the wide domain of religious biography, not least (for us) of preachers, great and less 'great' but good. We are led into their inner lives of faith and dedication, of struggle, failure, achievement. I am debtor to many such, but especially, I think, to two: Stopford Brooke: *F. W.*

*Robertson of Brighton* (read when I was young) and G. F. Barbour's *Alexander Whyte*.

For still more general reading we have the varied abundance of English literature, in prose and in poetry, for our pleasure no less than for our profit. We shall be made more aware of the astonishing beauty and wealth of the English language and we shall be given a deeper insight into the complexities of human life. Great literature is a formulated expression of life. But, to serve our own generation intelligibly, we should have more than a nodding acquaintance with contemporary literature, dealing with life as seen and interpreted, or misinterpreted, by writers of our own time.

For the enrichment of our souls we have several classics of devotion, some few of them bearing the imprimatur of centuries of Christian piety. But, beyond and above them all, is the Bible. This should be our daily companion. To read it in its original language is great gain, but if, for most of us, that is a counsel of perfection then we should bring to its study the best aids that we can secure. The more deeply we are steeped in it the better men we become, and the better preachers. "Take heed" said someone, after listening to a venerable minister: "forty years of a holy life are behind that sermon". Such sermons are sacramental, belonging to and enlarging the context of public worship. Through them our Lord Himself speaks to men, and the words that He speaks: "they are spirit and they are life".

Our study of the Bible, of course, leads us on to Biblical and Systematic Theology. Of these elevating studies I can say nothing, here and now, except to emphasize their importance and to make a plea for more expository and doctrinal preaching, thus rooting and grounding our people in the Faith. Therefrom, by God's grace, His Spirit will bring forth those fruits which are the virtues of Christ.

Such preaching is no intrusive "extra", foisted upon a congregation's worship, but its enrichment, perhaps even its consummation. We preach not ourselves but Christ Jesus. The preacher is only a servant of the Word of God, the Word preceding the sacraments. So to preach the minister requires time—for self-discipline, for prayer, and for particular preparation. He should seek the co-operation of his Church for its safe-guarding.

The pastoral duties of the ministry have their own inexorable claims. Although they do not come within my present reference, they have relevance in that we cannot preach helpfully to our people unless we know them personally. We cannot know them as persons if we see them only as members of the congregation. St. Paul visited his people "from house to house".

My brethren, what a privilege is ours! What a grace is given unto us unworthy men, to preach to our fellow-men "the unsearchable riches" of Christ! To what an august and exalted company we belong! How glorious a succession! Fellow-workers with St. Paul and with a countless host of men of whom the world was not worthy! No man, however brilliant,

whatever his social status, is too big for this high and holy and demanding office. Indeed, no man, of himself, is big enough. But our sufficiency is, always and everywhere, in the Lord who has called us.

E. W. PRICE EVANS

## SOME ABIDING VIRTUES OF THE VICTORIAN CHURCH

There were eleven virtues, three of them abiding ones: but first, to set the scene. If the tourist in Halifax takes a wrong turning on leaving the railway station, he will quickly find himself in a narrow Northern street, paved in an old fashioned way. He will be surrounded by elderly warehouses. Behind him the hills rise cleanly to moorland. In front of him towers a derelict chapel. It was latterly called Carlton Congregational Church, but for most of its life it was called Square Chapel. Square, Halifax, was a famous place. Its school buildings are square. They are roomy and labyrinthine. The church building is *not* square: it is Gothic, decorated in the right and wrong places, and richly so. Little images are carved over doors and portray, it is to be presumed, the Protestant Johns—Knox, Calvin and Wycliffe. The tracery of the windows is complicated, the tower and spire are nervously thrusting and it is now all very battered. Gravestones, which lie flat in the paving, surround the original buildings, many of them in memory of the Crossley family, the Johns and Franks and Marthas who made Square and, indeed, who made Halifax. The Crossley carpet mills were once the largest of their kind in Europe; perhaps they still are, because they are still there. The Crossley who gave the spire and the fancier parts of Square, also gave a People's Park draped with classical statues including one of himself in a damp little temple. He gave almshouses and schools and another chapel opposite his park and next to his villa, Belle Vue. Park Chapel is in cheaper Gothic, although it seats 1000 and cost £9,000. Chapels apart, the public buildings of Halifax, from Belle Vue to the Town Hall, reflect different interpretations of the French Renaissance style. They are very solid and are all hall-marked Crossley.

For many years Square declined. The Crossley carriages and motor cars ceased to drive down to it, even for anniversaries. The residential areas were never very close. Too late there came an amalgamation of causes and now the building is derelict, for the site is not central enough to be valuable and the cost of demolition is prohibitive. If anything portrays the accepted view of Victorian religion, it is Square.

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## THE BAPTIST INSURANCE COMPANY LIMITED

4 Southampton Row, London, WC1B 4AB

To the Members of the Baptist Ministers' Fraternal

Dear Friends,

"I have seen dawn and sunset on moors and windy hills  
Coming in solemn beauty like slow old tunes of Spain:  
I have seen the lady April bringing the daffodils,  
Bringing the springing grass and the soft warm April rain."

Beauty: John Masefield

I have long been an admirer of John Masefield's works but regret in a way that so often he is remembered, at least in church circles, only for brief sermon quotes from his "The Everlasting Mercy", "The Widow in Bye Street" or his "Good Friday".

There is a great deal more in Masefield than these, powerful as they are; more to Masefield too than the popular "Dirty British coaster with a salt-caked smoke stack".

The other day browsing through an Anthology of my school days entitled "The Ring of Words" I came across his poem on Beauty and this has driven me again to my "Collected Poems".

In the dark winter days these words have come anew as a breath of springtime, as an affirmation of what John Oxenham calls "Life out of death, the endless mystery;—"

Where does all this lead me? I think when I began this letter I intended to lead up to the need for looking at business matters, including insurance revisions, in the winter whilst deacons were all available and before they respond to the calls of Spring and Summer.

Perhaps however it would be a pity to spoil Masefield by a reference to business and I shall not say what I intended to say. Only this—read "Masefield" again and in full.

Yours sincerely,

C. J. L. COLVIN,

General Manager

For fifty years and more we have fondly consoled ourselves with this imagined thralldom to "Victorianism." In most spheres we now look at the Victorians in a detached and healthy spirit—their art, their literature, their architecture, certainly their science and now even their morals. Only where it concerns their Christianity are we still personally involved; there we remain resentful and defensive. It is all unnecessary.

The great thing about the Victorians is that they were alert to the demands of their day (not that it is really possible to speak of one "Victorian Age": there were many). The Victorians were truly contemporary. When it came to coping with problems, they did so in a more radical spirit than ourselves. The Victorian railway system, with its tunnels and viaducts, its termini and its frequent abrogations of the sacred rights of property, is a case in point. It is one of the odder corners of political history to read the correspondence in the 1860s between the middle-aged Gladstone and the octogenarian Palmerston, in which they seriously discuss the prospect of nationalising the railways. The Victorian answer to London's appalling traffic problems was the underground railway: infinitely more radical and thoughtful than subsequent solutions. Victorian education is another example. The transformation of Oxford and Cambridge, the emergence of London and the northern universities, the first great girls' schools, the public school system as it is now known, and the very profession of teacher, especially for women, were changes which have still to be equalled. There is the administrative sphere.

The Victorians created a Civil Service, which they opened to talent. The Victorians transformed local government—why else should the finest buildings in our industrial cities be town halls? Even in the sphere of agitation they were outstanding. The Anti-Corn Law League has become a household name; but what do we remember of that startlingly important agitation against the Contagious Diseases Acts? That campaign of the 1870s led genteel women, usually Christian and mostly middle-class (aristocratic women tended to lead less sheltered lives), not only to speak in public, but to speak in public on sexual matters. The implications of that are unimaginable.

Not one of these was a simple issue, as any study of the controversies about national education will show. In some ways, of course, the Victorians were helped by their belief in progress and the spirit of the age. Victorian Christians, for most of the time at least, were helped by not having to justify their faith: they had to adapt it, but not justify it. For all Victorians the world was improving and visibly so. The feeling was less strong by 1914, but it was only the First World War which showed how impossible it would be ever again to have this sense of security. Against this, the Victorians were haunted by a terrible fear of revolution, of assaults on property, and on belief, and on freedom as most of them understood it. This fear had dogged Europe since the French Revolution, and we underestimate its intensity and effect. They were also faced by the massive problems, on their very doorsteps, of poverty, disease and vice. Again we forget the intensity

and the novelty of these problems; *this* sort of poor had not always been with us, at least not like this.

The problems were not solved, of course; but decisive measures were taken, and we seldom remember that they were taken by the government of a nation still dominated by an aristocracy whose greatest vice was its ability. We can measure their success by the fact that we now regard their remedies as ageless, and so to be resented.

Surely this alertness, this contemporary-ness, was no less a mark of the Victorian Churches? It can be seen in six spheres.

The first must be the manner of their worshipping. A worshipper in 1900 would be less at home in his church in 1800—or even in 1830—than he would be in 1970. The Anglican would marvel at the emphasis that had come to be placed on Communion; so would many Free Churchmen (in itself a new concept), though they would more likely be surprised at the growing sophistication of chapel music and prayer and (dangerous word) atmosphere. Oddly enough, there was possibly less difference between average Anglican and average Dissenting worship in 1800, than there was in 1900. Both had changed greatly, but not in the same direction. These changes were reflexions of a need for relevance mingled with a different need for correctness and certainty, which we too easily call snobbery.

A second sphere is the growth of the agencies attached to the churches and particularly to the chapels. Now we dismiss them as tea meetings and coffee mornings. We forget the contribution of tea and coffee to reasonable and civilised living. We also forget that the objects of the Penny Banks, Purity Leagues, Dorcas Societies, the Young Men's and Young Women's Societies, the Bands of Hope and of Christian Endeavour, were to bring out the fullest human potential of perishing thousands: and the now derelict Church Institutes witness to their success and not to their failure. It is proper to recall that certain Building Societies and Travel Agencies grew from precisely this background. These churches aimed increasingly to be in the world, and if the world took over their agencies and ran them better, then many rejoiced: their church could not only be in that sort of world, it could be of it as well.

Then there was the attempt to reach the masses. The masses were revealed to be terribly unchurched by the unique religious census of 1851. Five million people who could have been in church on that wet March Census Sunday, were not; most of them, it seemed, were poor. It is fashionably stated that the churches failed to reach the masses. Yet contact was made, however often rejection followed. It was made repeatedly. Usually and inevitably it was piecemeal; usually it was with the better sort of poor. But contact was made and however inadequate it was, the sum of the activities promoted by the Sunday Schools and all the agencies pioneered by the Evangelicals (and it was usually by Evangelicals) amounts to a body of effective activity unequalled by any secular group. There is truth in the commonplace that much of the caring

image of the developing Labour Party, came first from this Evangelical Tradition. Neither need it be entirely irrelevant that the word "Hooligan" supposedly derives from an Irish family so named, discovered in the 1890s amidst the massive poverty of Lambeth, by workers from F. B. Meyer's Christ Church, Westminster Bridge Road.

Fourth comes the rather more successful attempt to reach the middle classes. This achievement is a derided one; indeed it was derided by many sensitive Victorians, presumably as a reflexion of that middle-class and Victorian quality, conscience. The English middle-classes, after all, were a mass class and a new class. There were many of them, and by far the larger part of those alive in 1880 would not have been middle class had they been alive in 1840. England might still be ruled by heavy Earls, but the middle-classes were very conscious, and properly so, of being the true nation-forming classes. What could be more relevant than that the churches should attempt to transform the new nation-formers? This was ancient ecclesiastical policy. It was dangerous, but it was also sensible and the attempt did not altogether fail. It was not for nothing that Lord Randolph Churchill nicknamed W. H. Smith "old morality."

The sphere of foreign missions has again been too easily derided: as indeed has been the British sort of Imperialism, and the two often accompanied each other. Liberal Imperialism was not an entirely disreputable creed for churchgoers to assume. It could encompass a generosity and an imagination which sometimes transcended and at least illuminated the failures and the selfishnesses, for the phrase "White Man's Burden" could imply an attitude of caring. We forget how mission consciousness transformed the minds of innumerable petty shopkeepers and their spinster sisters, all of them newly conscious of being nation-formers. We forget too the effect that the call to service had on the artisan sent inadequately prepared to southern islands in answer to prophecy, there to make the slow discovery that it need not be a Christian or a civilised thing to stamp out existing customs. Indeed the discovery that "Christian" and "civilised" were not necessarily synonymous must have been a vital thing. It is strange that we credit all Victorians with the gift of imagination save missionaries, who must have had it most fully. How else could they have upheld the interminable tensions with the colonial administrators or taken the first painful steps towards the ecumenical movement?

The sixth sphere is that of political awareness. People only say that the Church should not be involved in politics if it *is* involved in politics, and the Victorian Churches were increasingly involved in politics. That is a virtue of an Established Church; at least it makes the Tory Party pray. It also meant that where there existed a large number of non-established Churches, all manned (and increasingly womanned) by good middle-class, and therefore articulate, folk, there existed a ready made political opposition which was, as is their nature, radical without being anticlerical. This was a great and unique mercy, second only to the merciful paradox that for the larger

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part of the Queen's reign, this radical opposition was in fact connected with the party in office.

These six points are underlined by two more. First, the buildings of these churches, now so obsolete, reflected exactly all these things:— the schoolrooms, the spires, the galleries and the marble pulpits, even the lavatories and the heating systems. They were more often than not purpose-built. Secondly, of course, comes their theology. The changes in theology were as perplexing as the most advanced could desire. In 1900 a worshipper at an Evangelical church would be struck by the way Keswick had ousted Calvin; the word was *Indwelling*. Elsewhere the word was *Incarnation*: the man for others, perhaps? It might seem that the judgement once applied to what went on in Unitarian chapels now applied to all: it was a matter of "in late, out early, and no devil." Curiously, the change was profoundest where the externals were least changed; amongst the Quakers.

Here a pause is necessary: these eight points illustrate the relevance to their age alone of Victorian Christians. But if that is all there is to relevance then we must still forget the Victorians, for if by "truly contemporary" culture we really mean "solely contemporary" culture, then a thing has dated from the moment it receives tangible expression, and that is at worst an argument for consecrated flimsiness and at best for Christian restlessness. Restlessness *is* a Christian duty, but only if it is in tension with the equally pronounced sense of repose and recollection, for the lazy Christian is always the hardest working Christian in the end. The Victorian age was strongly marked by restlessness and repose: and it is only in such an atmosphere that the roots necessary for a truly contemporary attitude may grow. The Victorian church had eleven virtues, three of them abiding ones.

One was the emphasis they placed on people as individuals. The Victorians had an exaggerated respect for bulk and they were never so individualistic as we like to believe. But because their religion so often saw issues in terms of after-life—naturally so; they had a rather sensible awareness of death—they tended to see them in terms of souls. This was not entirely inadequate, for what can be more important or more comprehensive than a human soul, properly considered? It is more likely to lead to the conviction that people count than an exclusive emphasis on community. In Attercliffe, which was the slum heart of Sheffield, there rose above the grimy and repetitive terraces a grimy but massive chapel, in chaste Saxon style (which I take to be Victorian for ugly). On Victorian Sundays that chapel was full of working class families; its membership was the largest of any Congregational Church in the city. Inside it was almost magnificent; its gallery and organ, its proportions and finish were generous and the best of their kind. The building was neither obsolete nor alien; in the context of the leadership offered by its pastors and deacons it was the one building in the area where people counted, and could know this from the moment of their entrance in.

This leads to the second point: the emphasis which was placed on prominence. That building was as prominent as its

name—Zion, Attercliffe. It was fitted for its purpose. Our Christian witness should still be prominent, in the sense of the excellence of our buildings. Granted that most of our buildings are unfitted for current demands and that we lack the faith (or have the sense not) to incur vast debts in replacing them, the sheer inadequacy of our modern buildings is nonetheless disturbing. They may or may not advertise themselves for what they are, but they certainly are erected with little sense of responsibility to their surroundings. This is important. In a rich and civilised country it is very much a Christian duty to contribute to the physical quality of life: conservation is a Christian concern, and trusteeship of the prominent buildings which we have inherited is very much a Christian duty. The keeping of old buildings for sentiment's sake is not the point; what is the point is that if adaptation proves impossible, our replacement or disposal of them should not be done as it is usually done: partly vitiated by sentiment, partly by misplaced efficiency or misunderstood relevance and almost wholly by ignorance. This is easier for Anglicans, who love their cathedrals. It is hard for Free Churchmen educated to believe that buildings are never the Church, but even Free Church spires may dream with profit outside Oxford.

And finally, the third abiding aspect of Victorian contemporaryness: they were not frightened by tradition. They had discovered how wasteful is an ignorance of the past. The Anglican rediscovery of the Fathers and of supposedly Catholic virtues, the universal rediscovery of Gothic, of the best in the past, was not the least relevant of their responses. The Best Victorian Gothic is, after all, Victorian rather than Gothic; it is merely good architecture, reflecting the needs and spirit of its time and adding point to its surroundings. In Huddersfield or Halifax, or Bradford or Liverpool, this can now for the first time be appreciated, with the air cleaner and the slums less obtrusive. Thank God they sought to recapture Fontainebleau and Blois, and ducal Venice in Exchange Street and Victoria Square. All this striving after past dignity and the challenge of abroad (which Browning perfectly expressed) exercised the imagination of people with time for the first time for imagination, whose consciences confronted them with problems demanding imagination if they were to be solved. It gave a sense of identity with the saintly and successful of the past. It gave roots and the security born of a sense of achievement. It gave too a sort of involvement. It was at once part of the spirit of their age, and an antidote to that spirit. It provided Victorian Christians with a useful tension in their lives and it made them truly contemporary.

To conclude: we need the Victorian virtues to get the Victorians out of our system. It is a sort of historical homeopathy.

J. C. G. BINFIELD

## THE MINISTRY OF HEALING IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

In the early years of my ministry I was constantly admonished by the words of Christ to the commissioned disciples that they were to "Proclaim the Kingdom of God and to heal". Of course I was visiting the sick and praying for them but was that all my church could do? My conscience was further rebuked by meeting suffering people who were writing away to be prayed for by healing groups and attending public meetings in hope of a cure. Why should they need to do this when there were churches in every town ostensibly raised up for an apostolic ministry?

These nagging reflections and a visit to an Anglican church exercising a healing ministry spurred me into action and I called a Church Conference to discover what we could do. Our study of the New Testament made it clear that Our Lord intended His disciples to engage in the healing ministry. There runs through the gospels the threefold command to Preach, Teach and Heal. The Ordination to Heal is recorded in Mark 3.14, 16.18., Luke 9.2, 10.8: The Acts of the Apostles has many vivid stories of the fulfilment of those words. There were doctors in those days using medicine but Christ called his disciples to use prayer, laying on of hands, love and faith to heal the sick.

Our Lord practised healing and many miracles are recorded. These we understand were not contrary to nature but the application of insight and spiritual laws unknown to others and matched by a disciplined life of prayer allied to a wealth of compassion. There is a "Gift of Healing" bestowed by the Spirit, used by the Apostles and evidenced in many today but besides this there is still a command to heal laid upon the church. We found that the church, which for centuries had been the major source of healing and compassion in the world, had now largely left the field to the medical profession and the Christian with a vocation to be a doctor or nurse. The hospital has been called the Temple of Humanism and the role of non-physical healing taken over by the marginal sects and "independent" healers who sometimes do more harm than good. But there had been some renewal of the healing ministry in this century by those who do not wish to by-pass the medical profession but work alongside it.

Those who felt a special concern for this ministry agreed to meet fortnightly for prayer and further study. Out of this evolved our Prayer Circle for Divine Healing. We set aside a quiet upper room, pleasantly decorated, warm and always beautified by flowers. The setting is important as sometimes the sick, and often the discouraged, are present and surroundings and atmosphere must conspire to uplift. After some experiment the pattern emerged. We begin with a prayer or some united act of worship and follow with prayers of thanksgiving and confession. We pray for all who are engaged in healing throughout the community including those who are not committed Christians that their work might be

more and more done "in His name". But we believe all healing is of God whoever practises it. We see our task as often to co-operate with physicians, surgeons, nurses and loved ones by supporting prayer but we are aware that there are many spiritual and mental factors in healing in which an Intercession Group can be a channel of the Holy Spirit. While obviously faith in God and His power is a significant factor in healing, at no time do we suggest that the responsibility for faith lies with the person who seeks help. In fact we never use the term "faith-healing". Our approach has been finely expressed in this way: "The Loving Community can heal sometimes, help often, comfort always".

We then have a few minutes of stillness and relaxation to prepare ourselves to be channels of the healing love of Christ. It is only common sense that worries and anxieties will be dispelled if the physical tensions have left us. The simple techniques of relaxation are found in many books and in this connection Eric Hayden has written a stimulating book *Everyday Yoga for Christians* which could be a help to many. Breathing is very important and we often link this with prayers of affirmation—"Thy breath fills me", "God is love and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God". As we relax we fix our minds upon the presence and power of Our Lord and remember that just as the radio waves all around us need a transistor to broadcast music and messages so God's love and power fills the world and He needs hearts and minds attuned to Him for the healing ministry.

We then pray for the sick in mind and body who have asked for prayer to be made for them. Sometimes they will be present or will be engaged in prayer (as they are able) at home or in hospital. We endeavour to maintain contact with them so that regularly I can give any reason for thanksgiving or mention a special need. Mainly we pray in silence and occasionally say together "Father we thank and praise Thee for Thy healing". We carry a mental picture of the sick person being blessed by the risen Christ. Between groups of prayers we pause for a Bible Reading and a short meditation or perhaps the mention of someone who has been specially helped. After this there is the opportunity for any who desire it to receive the laying on of hands. This can be a very real conveyance of peace to troubled hearts, as a sign of the healing that Christ desires us or our loved ones to possess and an assurance of the care and prayer of God's people in days to come. Finally the group stand and the minister takes the book which contains the names of all those who in the past have been mentioned in the Circle. Some have been healed and we offer thanks. Others are "with Christ" and we hold them in loving remembrance. After we have said the Grace together there is the opportunity to speak about practical ways in which we may help the sick and always we arrange to take the flowers to someone on the list.

One or two factors call for comment. Where possible we like our prayer to be in the intelligent knowledge of a situation and regular reports encourage the intercessors. But we have

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## WEST HAM CENTRAL MISSION

409 Barking Road, Plalstow, London. E13 8AL

My dear Brother Minister,

**FIRE AT GREENWOODS:** I imagine that you will have seen a report in the Baptist Times that we have had a fire at Greenwood's. Fortunately, it was confined to the old stables, which are separate from the main building, and although it was a terrible nuisance and produced all kinds of reactions in the residents at Greenwood's, yet we are most grateful that it was a limited set back and not a catastrophe.

The damage resulted from an act of arson on the part of one of the people we were trying to help at Greenwood's. He is a young man who has a very sad history and we thought he was making a great deal of progress. It is another illustration of the kind of risk that has to be taken if we are to help people in serious trouble. We made suitable representations to the Authorities, and as a result we have been able to persuade the powers that be to send the boy to a psychiatric hospital for treatment rather than for him to be sent away to prison.

**ORCHARD HOUSE:** We are now building up the increased family at Orchard House and we are very nearly full. Naturally, we are quite 'colour blind' as far as residents are concerned and we have a long history of successful integration in the Home. We are now getting to the point when we have to watch very carefully the balance of coloured and non-coloured residents, and we have come to the conclusion that we must not let the coloured section get to more than 50%, as we believe that there is evidence that if we did, we should be asking for a situation in which there would be trouble. We are glad to report that we have never had any bother between the races; at least, when we do get bother it is between the coloured folk, or between the white folk and not a coloured confrontation! We should be grateful if you would ask your prayer meeting to remember the boys at Orchard House in their prayers from time to time.

**MARNHAM HOUSE SETTLEMENT:** Some time ago we took a resident from a mental hospital into our care at Rest-a-While, our old 'ladies home'. She has recently had a relapse and has suffered from hallucinations. She has been quite sure that when we disapprove of our residents at Rest-a-While we do away with them quietly and store them in the cellar, and afterwards bury them under the Angus lawn, which is a delightful strip of lawn on our premises here at Barking Road! When this poor woman was in her full flight of fantasy my wife spotted her coming across the lawn. My wife was carrying a spade and she had to take evasive action in order not to confirm the suspicion of this deluded mind. We had a good laugh but, of course, it is sad, and yet another illustration of the risks we have to take in order to try and help.

We are grateful to you and your church for any practical help you give us and we hope we can rely on you for the constant support of your prayers.

May God's blessing be on you, and your own family, and on your own ministry.

Yours very sincerely,

STANLEY TURL.

Superintendent of the West Ham Central Mission.

schooled ourselves to pray positively for people without always enquiring why they need our prayers, still less delving into their illness. The Prayer Circle is a relaxed and happy fellowship because we constantly have our eyes on Christ who has called us to this ministry. Thinking always of others we avoid the danger of being a church clique "gone on healing"! We regard our work as a priestly ministry for the whole church.

We are not burdened with an anxiety to produce dramatic results—we are workers together with God—and industrial chemists, welfare workers, doctors and nurses. Our prayers we believe have been answered, for example in the case of a young couple who tragically lost a baby boy of eighteen months. He was much wanted and conceived after the taking of fertility pill. I visited them and they went on our Prayer list and started to come to church. Within six weeks the wife was pregnant again and now they are the proud parents of another little boy. Is it not possible that Christian fellowship, love and prayer gave a peace of mind conducive to conception and certainly helped a young couple overcome a terrible grief?

Another man in his early twenties with a severe mental illness has held down an exacting post and found strength to confess his Lord in baptism. Many have expressed their gratitude to us for our constancy in prayer and the help they have received. But often the sickness is too complex a condition to enable anyone to claim that one factor alone resulted in healing. Our experience would lead us to see that the main task of a Healing Prayer Group is to influence the non-physical factors in a person's illness since invariably the sick person is receiving medical or surgical aid. But this is a vital role. I recently heard a doctor say that if a patient can be freed from the irrational neurotic and emotional anxieties the medical man can begin to right what is essentially wrong with the body.

A question I am constantly asking myself is "What is the ministry of the Prayer Circle to the so-called incurable—for instance those we have on our list with multiple sclerosis or cancer?" Firstly, I am sure that we can set no limits to what God can accomplish. The sick are in His hands and we are commanded to pray for them. But equally it would be wrong to buoy people's hopes up for a cure and then for their faith to be dashed to the ground. Ultimately in life and in death we are in the hands of God and it is our pastoral responsibility to communicate this to the sick and their loved ones. After all, we must all die someday and a constituent of the Gospel is that "this corruptible body must put on incorruption". Part of our healing ministry may be to prepare people for that journey, whenever the call shall come. Secondly it seems to me that in this situation the Prayer Circle is there "to sit where they sit", to sustain a ministry of caring and understanding over many months or years. Part of the terror of the extreme "sickness situation" is the feeling of isolation. Our Prayer Circle has found ways of assuring folk that they are not alone—arranging a brief holiday, extra nursing care, letters and visits. We try to ensure that the love of God for them means something very practical.

When we began we had little knowledge and felt our way forward but in the journey we discovered some good books which would help any church concerned to fulfil a healing ministry. *The Forgotten Talent* (Fontana Paperback) is the exciting story of how ministers in the Church of Scotland have helped the sick and suffering. *The Church is Healing* (S.C.M.) by Michael Wilson is a good book for the thoughtful layman and discusses with clarity the spiritual side of sickness and wholeness. For those who want to go deeper I can recommend *Community, Church and Healing* (Darton, Longman and Todd) by R. A. Lambourne. He was a general practitioner in Birmingham who was convinced that the closer co-operation and understanding between medicine and Church would only follow a deeper study of the theology and philosophy of healing. He traces the Biblical view of the nature of man, examines healing in the New Testament and relates his findings to church life and community needs today.

Dr. Lambourne helped me to see that our obligations to Our Lord's command are not discharged by tacking a Prayer Circle on to the church programme. This may be a focus and its ministry beneficial to the sick, but healing is a function of the church in all its worship and witness. Our task is the salvation of men and the New Testament word for the saving relationship with Christ is the medical word meaning "made whole". Salvation then will not mean the saving of an entity called a soul but an experience of forgiveness, peace of mind, renewal of the will, and may well result in physical healing. The healing of the paralysed man recorded in Mark 2.1—12 is an obvious example. But salvation will not necessarily mean deliverance from disease and suffering. Healing may mean a greater fortitude to endure pain and prove God's words to Paul "My grace is sufficient for thee". Healing may mean a greater insight and the ability to discern a meaning in the affliction. A mother with multiple sclerosis for whom we pray found Christ in her darkest hour and wrote down her testimony ". . . I have faith for the rest of my life, so out of what at the time seemed a terrible unendurable tragedy, came something stupendous and very wonderful. Now if I ever ask myself "Why did this happen to me?" I know the answer.

Healing may mean a greater willingness to share in the sufferings of Christ. "By the common usage of 'saved' for what faith in Christ does for the sick man and for the sinner, the states of sin and redemption, sickness and healing, are made to illuminate each other. So a 'healthy' man is one who has been saved by faith in Christ: he has been joined to him in a life of obedience to the Father, love of all men, self-sacrifice and suffering, joy and crucifixion". (Lambourne)

It seems therefore legitimate to view all our ministry as a "healing" ministry and this may well evoke a response in modern man who resists attempts to "save his soul" but who knows his need to be "made whole". This is surely best demonstrated in the on-going preaching, teaching and life of the local church. A Prayer Group at a distance from the local church and a Public Meeting for Healing may well encourage

a person to come to Christ for His gifts rather than for Himself—the story of the nine lepers all over again. We need therefore to preach the Word as well as to pray. "If Christ had been content to do wonders he would not have been crucified. It is when he says of the clinical events, his healings, that in them the salvation events by Isaiah have been fulfilled that the crowd throw him out of the synagogue, reject him and later crucify him. The word of God is diagnostic, therapeutic, and received unworthily very toxic". (Lambourne)

The Communion Service is a healing occasion. It is a remembrance of Christ's life, death, and resurrection in which all participating may have communion. "The Holy Communion is therefore offered to us as a prophylactic and healing occasion when our love for one another is refreshed, so that in Christ we heal one another as we are all healed by our Head. Where there is new love for one another, there the sickening power of envy, hatred, malice and all uncharitableness, which sustains and regenerates neurotic anxiety, is broken". (Lambourne)

The fellowship of the local church is a healing ministry as we care for the needy, willingly spending time listening to problems and discerning the unspoken cries for help: visiting the sick with the sacrament of the cup of cold water—in modern terms the dinner taken to the door, the washing dealt with and the shopping fetched. In all kinds of ways we can bring solace to wounded spirits.

I have said nothing of the New Testament "gifts of healing" which some Christians have been granted and who use this "odid force" in the name of Christ. My concern has been to discover the role of the church in obedience to Christ's command. Where this is comprehended in twentieth century terms, and acted upon, I am sure that many more ministers and lay people will find they possess the "gift of healing" and we can encourage them to work alongside those who use love, faith, prayer, drugs, surgery and every nursing and community aid to heal the sick.

A lot of thought is being given today to the church's function in modern life. We are told we have been edged out of all we used to do in amelioration of human distress—avenues of service that became a highway for the Gospel. Here is a ministry for people, terrifically challenging to discipline and faith, related to the needs of all kinds and conditions of men and for which the church is uniquely fitted. If we don't practise it nobody else will.

PHILIP H. GATHERCOLE

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## “MINISTRY TOMORROW”

**B.M.F. Survey of Opinion, 1970**

This member of the BMF Executive was very surprised by the strong feeling and the spontaneous request at the March General Committee for the ministers to be asked for their views on some of the issues raised or not raised by the “Ministry Tomorrow” report. One thousand, five hundred and ten questionnaires were sent out. Previous experience over the years with sending out arrears notices suggested that there must be a follow-up reminder in order to achieve a good result of 60% replies, so a large cross-section of questionnaires were numbered. Anonymity is a false god, not respected by the G.P.O., which is worshipped by only a select few. Most replies were accompanied by signed letters. Only two abusive letters were received out of the 1,092 replies received up to Sept. 7th. As there has been a 72% return, reminders were sent to only a few before this was stopped. This immediate response from so many brethren is explained by the letters which had the general theme that everyone seemed to be asking the Churches but not bothering to ask the ministers. More pointedly some like London, N., “It is encouraging to find that there are people in the Fellowship who care about these things. One hopes that it will result in something being done.” From Devon “I am glad that something specific is being done in addition to talking.” From Lancashire “We applaud your efforts to do something to meet the need.” Various fears came to the surface, in Middlesex it was hoped that the Survey was not part of a softening up for “Centralisation” or from Yorkshire “Connexionalism”. Replies were sent to some in order to help understanding.

A survey amongst Baptist ministers has the peculiar difficulty that the theological discipline cultivates an ability to find a vast range of meaning, especially in what to the layman may seem a simple question. However, the “Yes” or “No” was used as it gives the possibility of three alternative answers and is related to how we normally decide issues or test opinion. All comments were read carefully to ensure that the computer processed card would carry the meaning intended. 1,003 were processed and analysed. The remainder had not been answered for this purpose by those who for reasons of near retirement, extraordinary employment (eg Tutors) or, a very few, rare theological reasons did not feel their answers would be of help to the brethren.

The “Ministry Tomorrow” report passes over the long discussed idea of payment from a central fund. Is this idea extinct? The support is greater than the report expects. 399 (40%) of brethren prefer to be paid from a central fund; 541 (54%) prefer not; 63 (6%) did not answer. But is this a developing idea or diminishing? The age groupings show a static preference: Up to 30 years 40% Yes: 56% No. Between 30-39 years 35% Yes: 58% No. Between 40-49 years 40% Yes: 55% No. 50-59 years 38% Yes: 54% No. Over 60 years 46% Yes: 44% No. The comments suggest that present cir-

cumstances greatly affect a minister's preference. The payment from a central fund with possible supplements from the local church drew less interest; 34% Yes: 55% No. There was an unpredictably strong feeling that the basic stipend be increased according to years in the ministry (assuming that the increase did not depend on the local church), 80% in favour: 16% against. Support was consistent through the age groupings. Up to 30 years 72% Yes: 30-39 years 77% Yes: 40-49 years 82% Yes: 50-59 years 81% Over 60 years 80% Yes. That 805 Baptist ministers agree on any one point ought to be noted with a view to action. The relationship of stipend to size of church was dismissed 34% Yes: 60% No. Can it not be reasoned that if brethren are only 4 to 5 against a central fund and are 4 to 1 in favour of increments, that do not depend on the local church, that this point points towards a central fund whose purpose is to provide the increments. The present Home Mission Fund has an ambiguity in payments being made according to the individual church accounts and yet appeals are stated in terms of what is questionably called a "standard stipend". (It makes the minister on a "standard stipend" fully paid up by the church, the victim of the church's stipend" fully paid by the church, the victim of the church's to be related to ministers rather than churches? The "Ministry Tomorrow" report has accurately covered this idea of increases in stipend according to age. Due credit ought to be given for this.

If desirable, 33% would make time for secular work but as so many qualified their answer by stating that they would be very reluctant to do so the 60% against can be regarded as a hard-core of probably an even greater reluctance to make tents as a sideline. 66% preferred to own their own car. 25% were against, but some did say that they could not drive. The age groups of up to 30 years 54% preferred, 30-39 years 61%, 40-49 years 63%, 50-59 years 72%, 60 plus 64% shows that as means become available there is a growing preference to own one's own car. It had been intended in this section to ask a question on whether brethren would be in favour of buying their own house if the mythical extra £300 p.a. was paid. The difficulty in preparing a question that would be taken as meant was too great. So our apologies to all those who like one of our number feels that "the day of the tied-cottage is over". The questions concerning working effectiveness produced some platitudes "I accept the size of church that the Lord gives me" and "Mine is an all-round ministry so I do not need help" which send a chill through the blood. The criticism (London East) that the question about effective size does not allow for the local situation is accepted. However the "Ministry Tomorrow" report must be faced on this. Is it part of our experience that "300 members are needed to give a minister job satisfaction and financial security?" Larger churches are not necessarily more generous and only the minister doing the work can say whether there is job satisfaction in it for him. The disillusioned in any profession or vocation can be a very vocal and misleading minority. Assuming, not unreasonably, that satisfaction comes from feeling that one's ministry is

being effective, the view of the brethren worked out that in their opinion the viable and optimum size is as follows:

Age groups.	Up to 100	101-150	151-200	201-250	251-300	301-350	350+
Up to 30 yrs.	13%	23%	26%	10%	7%	1%	—
30 to 39 yrs.	6%	22%	27%	25%	8%	2%	—
40 to 49 yrs.	5%	15%	24%	17%	16%	7%	4%
50 to 59 yrs.	8%	16%	23%	23%	16%	6%	2%
Over 60 yrs.	10%	20%	24%	20%	10%	5%	2%
Averages	8%	19%	25%	20%	12%	5%	2%

All age groups fix on 151-200 members as being the most viable size fellowship. If this is compared with the report page 20 Table 1(a) it can be seen that there is a cliff-edge falling off between the number of churches of 101-150 and 151-200. The drop is almost 50%! This reveals that there is a factor, as yet unrevealed, which inhibits the growth of a church beyond 150. This survey shows that ministers are willing to work in larger memberships than this. Is it not time that we asked for the active co-operation of churches in the 100-151 membership in practical experiments in breaking through this inhibiting barrier? 62% agreed that they would accept more than one fellowship to make up the number selected. 30% were against this.

In order to investigate the possibility of using a supplementary ministry it was found that 80% would be willing to work with a paid colleague (Lay or ordained) and only 13% rejected this. Our next problem was to assess where the need for help or support is to be found. Some mistakenly thought that the question meant someone who would exclusively take on all of one speciality. This was not intended and most understood this. There appears to be a decided opinion that this help should not be a faint echo of what already exists. It worked out as follows:

Administration	3%	You	32%	A.N.Other
Child & Adult Educ.,	11%		35%	
Evangelism	6%		18%	
Pastoral Visit & Coun.	32%		12%	
Preaching	47%		3%	

A small number took the trouble to mention "Youth Work" as an area in which they needed help. This was not listed because this is a recipient and the list was meant to sort out operational aspects of our ministry. The high percentages in Administration and Education for needed help may be predictable but they ought to be taken seriously. Is it possible that we have members with business experience and teaching ability whom we are not bringing into a shared responsibility because there is no official church place set for them?

The overwhelming "vote" of the survey is the 90% who said yes to a refresher course of not less than three weeks at say five year intervals. Only 6% were against this. One suggestion was that this should be of differing types so that brethren could select to go to one that suited their present needs. Most comments asked that the course should be practical rather than academic. But very few defined their use of the term "practical".

All brethren are thanked for sending in their replies. Thanks to Horace Webb who addressed all the envelopes, to the three children of this manse for folding, sticking, posting etc., for hours and hours and to Mr. A. A. Mercer, my Church Secretary, who processed the results through a computer for us, at his own expense.

VIC SUMNER

## HOLIDAY ACCOMMODATION

We received a request recently from the Home Counties Baptist Association to give publicity to its caravan which is available for lettings to ministers and their families during the holiday season. This prompted the thought that perhaps other associations had similar accommodation available which would be more widely in use if the information were to be made available to the constituency through this journal. Enquiry showed that in fact only one or two associations seem to have thought about this or, having thought, have actually done something about it. Perhaps the initial outlay is a deterrent—but with the cost of holidays rising by leaps and bounds, many of us are doubtless "priced out" of an ordinary holiday, and if we don't want a working holiday nor wish to take part in some communal venture, the needed time away presents something of a problem. So associations might well be prompted to consider some kind of holiday provision.

Anyway, the accommodation which is available is as follows:

(1) the London Baptist Association possesses two caravans available to ministers. One is at *Pagham, near Bognor, Sussex* and will accommodate 6+1 persons at a cost of £6 per week in season (£4 per week out of season), inclusive of heat and light and cooking. The association secretary indicates that costs may have to rise shortly, but a decision is pending. Applications for bookings to be made to the Revd. H. E. Ward at 137, Pollards Hill South, S.W.16 The second caravan is sited at *Winchelsea, Sussex*: the costs are identical to the first, but the number accommodated is 4+1. In this case applications for bookings should be made to the Revd. N. L. Stokes, 176 Park Crescent, Erith, Kent.

(2) The Home Counties Baptist Association has one caravan sited at *North Bersted, near Bognor, Sussex*. It is a five berth van, and the cost, inclusive of heat, light and cooking runs from £5-10-0 to £6-10-0 according to season. Applications for bookings to be made to Mr C. O. Hunt, "Darent", Boxgrove Lane, Guildford, Surrey.

(3) The Pembroke Baptist Association asked us to mention that their *conference centre near Fishguard* could accommodate 5 or 6 families at once, and it is apparently planned to make the establishment available for holidays in this way. The charges at present are between £7 and £7-10-0 per week per person, which doesn't exactly put it in the price range looked for: but the secretary writes "as yet we have not considered what charges to make for family bookings, that's why I suggested it would be best for any ministers interested to write to the chairman of the Management Committee and a reasonable scale of charges agreed upon". The secretary is Mr Ralph E. Davies, Willow Mead, Whithybus, Haverfordwest, Pembro.

(4) The Manse at *Bacton, Norfolk*, is vacant, since the local pastor has other accommodation. So the church makes the house available to ministers for holidays. This has been advertised in the "Baptist Times" as available for the winter, but will remain so, one gathers, for the holiday season. No details given, but these are obtainable from Mr P. Golden, Sundial Cottage, Bacton, Norfolk.

No doubt many of us "know a man who knows a man" who rents camps, cottages, caravans or what you will to ministers in search of a holiday—we had one or two suggestions of this kind. But the list stated is the total of anything recommended by association secretaries upon enquiry, for us to draw upon if we will.

## OF INTEREST TO YOU

*Calls have been accepted as follows:*

F. J. Baldwin (to London Road, Stoke on Trent): Michael Ball (to United, Pontypridd): Harold Bartlett (to Bethel, Fishguard): George Bradley (to Harlow): John Drane (to Sudbury, Suffolk): Keith Feltham (to Ford, Plymouth): Peter Goodlad (to Seven Kings, Ilford): Arthur Gray (to Cowes): Roy Hicks (to Christchurch, Hants.) J. Hodgson (to Nelson, Lancs, part of Colne and Nelson fellowship): David Jacques (to Salem, Hillingdon Heath): Leslie Jenkins (to Yiewsley, Middx.): John and Ruth Matthews (to joint pastorate of Baptist Tabernacle, Swindon): Neil McVicar (to Dronfield): Roy Parker (to team at Burnley Lane, Burnley): Geoffrey Richards (to Daybrook, Nottingham): Neil Rose (to Priory Street, York): W. R. Trueman (to Park, Great Yarmouth): S. J. Wallace (to College Street, Northampton): David Wilcox (to Howard Street, North Shields).